DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 315 029 IR 014 103

AUTHOR Jay, M. Ellen; And Others
TITLE Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs. A Discussion Guide.
INSTITUTION American Association of School Librarians, Chicago, Ill.; Association for Educational Communications and Technology, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-8389-7256-X; ISBN-0-89240-056-0
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 28p.; For "Information Power," see IR 014 102.
AVAILABLE FROM American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611; Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1126 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036 ($4.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Access to Information; Cooperative Planning; Curriculum; Elementary Secondary Education; Equal Education; Guidelines; Information Networks; *Information Services; *Leadership; *Learning Resources Centers; *Library Collection Development; *Library Standards; Media Specialists; Program Implementation

ABSTRACT

The most recent set of national guidelines for the development of school library media programs, which was published in 1988, identifies underlying changes in the roles of the school library media specialist as well as in the program itself. Viewing the library media specialist as an initiator of curricular activities rather than a purveyor of support services, these guidelines emphasize leadership, partnership, planning, curricular needs, collection development, and equity of access to information. This discussion guide has been developed to help educators at all levels to plan meetings and conduct effective discussion sessions with persons who have become familiar with "Information Power" in its entirety, in order to evaluate local school library media programs in light of the recent revisions. The first of three sections identifies the principal concepts presented in "Information Power" and provides an overview of each of its eight chapters. Procedures by which discussion sections may be effectively organized to promote the successful exchange of knowledge and views are recommended in the second section. The final section identifies specific constituencies for discussion groups and suggests discussion questions for each of the groups--i.e., library media specialists, administrators and boards of education, classroom teachers, college and university faculty, state department of education personnel, and members of the community at large--as well as questions for mixed constituency groups and questions basic to all discussion sessions. (GL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED315029

A Discussion Guide for

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

INFORMATION POWER

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Stan Zenor

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Guidelines For School Library Media Programs

IR014103

A Discussion Guide for

INFORMATION POWER

Guidelines for School Library Media Programs

Prepared by M. ELLEN JAY, MICHAEL D. LEAHY, and HILDA L. JAY for the Joint Committee for Implementation of the Guidelines

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS, A DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION and the ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
Chicago 1988
and
ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
Washington, D.C. 1988

This publication can be purchased from the
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611
or from the
ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS
AND TECHNOLOGY
1126 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036

Copyright © 1988 by the American Library Association and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. All rights reserved except those which may be granted by Sections 107 and 108 of the Copyright Revision Act of 1976.

Printed in the United States of America.

Funding for the development of this publication was provided by the H.W. Wilson Foundation.

Contents

PREFACE		v
SECTION 1:	An Overview of *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs*	1
SECTION 2:	Organizing Discussion Sessions	10
SECTION 3:	Planning Questions for Discussion Sessions	14
CONCLUSION		20

Preface

Periodically, since 1945, national guidelines have been published that provide the philosophical framework used by states and individual school districts to establish standards to guide the development of local school library media programs. Each revision of the guidelines has reflected the growth and evolution of the school library media program concept. Additionally, the appearance of each set of national guidelines has led to a re-evaluation of local programs along with an effort to upgrade and improve educational experiences linking students and school library media programs.

Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs, like its immediate predecessor, is a document produced by a joint committee made up of members of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT). These practitioners have identified underlying changes in the roles of the school library media specialist as well as in the school library media program. They have focused on assumptions, or program thrusts, which require re-examination. Significantly emphasized are leadership, partnership, planning, curricular needs, collection development, and equity of access to information. A significant and far-reaching revision is the shift away from viewing the school library media program as merely a support service to seeing the library media specialist now as an initiator of curricular activities.

Although a school library media specialist accepts basic responsibility and offers leadership for developing and maintaining

the school library media program, a quality program suitable for today's students cannot be achieved by a school library media specialist working alone. To prepare students for life in the twenty-first century, a supportive partnership must be created, extending across the entire school structure ranging from members of boards of education to parents. Educators at every level will want to analyze the new guidelines to identify and evaluate areas of change. They will identify the effectiveness of local school library media programs in terms of the educational thrusts identified in the guidelines, determine the quality level to be achieved locally, and devise ways of implementing this standard into their own schools.

Basic to such activity will be discussion sessions among interested persons. This guide has been designed to help discussion leaders plan meetings and conduct effective discussion sessions with persons who have become familiar with *Information Power* in its entirety.

Section 1 of this Discussion Guide identifies the principal concepts presented in *Information Power*, and provides an overview of each chapter. This overview is not intended as a summary or abstract and it should not be construed as a substitute for the document itself.

Section 2 of the Guide recommends procedures by which discussion sessions may be effectively organized to promote the successful exchange of knowledge and views.

Section 3 of the Guide identifies specific constituencies for discussion groups and three types of discussion questions:

- questions derived directly from *Information Power*
- questions basic to all discussion sessions
- specialized questions for specific constituency groups.

Section

An Overview of *Information Power*

Professional guidelines are generally intended as framework documents, promoting philosophical and theoretical bases for the evolution of a profession. The 1988 edition of guidelines for school library media programs—*Information Power*—has been formulated in response to significant changes in the volume and sources of information resources, as well as the range of services, for which library media specialists are increasingly responsible. The primary purpose of *Information Power* is to provide guidance in developing library media programs that expand learners' access to, and use of, information and ideas.

Information Power—Introduction

As stated in the introduction to *Information Power*, these new guidelines are "based on the premise that teachers, principals, and library media specialists must form a partnership and plan together to design and implement the program that best matches the instructional needs of the school." It is the intent of these guidelines to focus on the efforts of a building-level school library media specialist to exercise leadership in continually developing a program responsive to school curricula. The guidelines emphasize a critical concept: "Promoting effective physical access to information resources and intellectual access to the content" of those resources.

Information Power—Chapter One

Several conceptual thrusts are identified in *Information Power:*

- intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats
- comprehensive collection development (rather than simply the selection and acquisition of materials)
- integration of systematic learning activities with library media resources to emphasize higher-order cognitive strategies (critical thinking skills) for selecting, retrieving, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information
- the reshaping of library media program outputs and environments to accommodate: changing and diversifying populations; challenges to intellectual freedom; equity of access to all formats of information, including new and emerging technologies; and intensified improvement of higher-order reading comprehension skills by learners of all age and ability levels
- evaluation, management, and integration of emerging technologies
- networks of information resources extending beyond the school library media center.

Information Power—Chapter Two

The 1988 guidelines continue to emphasize the integration of a school library media center into the instructional programs of a school, organizing information resources and technologies for both teaching and learning. Library media centers are intended as information laboratories, providing students with experiences and training as the basis for lifelong interaction with information resources.

The library media specialist is an information intermediary, not only organizing materials, equipment, and facilities, but also planning and implementing learning activities cooperatively with teachers and instructional leaders within the school. Thus, the library media specialist performs the triple roles of information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant.

***Information Power*—Chapter Three**

In the role of information specialist, a library media specialist provides:

- flexible access to the library media center
- adequate resources to meet changing needs of the school's instructional programs
- assistance in locating information and developing search strategy skills
- assistance to users in selecting appropriate resources, being sensitive to the needs and skills of individual students
- flexible policies for the use of resources, emphasizing maximum access to all users
- retrieval systems for accurate and efficient access to information resources.

In the role of teacher, a library media specialist provides:

- instruction to students in skills, knowledge, and attitudes concerning information access, use, and communication
- instruction to educators in the selection, use, evaluation, and production of library media resources
- instruction to parents in sharing reading, listening, and viewing experiences with their children.

In the role of instructional consultant, a library media specialist provides:

- skills in the selection, evaluation, and use of resources and emerging technologies, sharing in the process of curriculum development
- development of instruction through the systematic design, production, implementation, and evaluation of instructional units, collaborating with classroom teachers and instructional leaders within the school
- assessment of the potential impact of emerging information and instructional technologies on the school program.

Information Power—Chapter Four

As stated in the guidelines, "Leadership is the crucial factor in creating a quality library media program that is an integral part of the school curriculum. Effective leadership articulates the vision of such a program with enthusiasm and confidence." Effective leadership on the part of the library media specialist is manifested by:

- an understanding of that which makes a library media program a program
- skill in articulating the goals, objectives, and potential of a library media program, which is planned as an integral part of teaching and learning in the school
- interpersonal skills in working interactively with several constituencies—teachers, students, administrators, parents, and the community—to meet individual and curricular needs as outgrowths of cooperatively identified goals and objectives of the library media program.

Effective leadership is likewise manifested through commitment to a systematic and ongoing planning cycle to monitor a library media program as a working component of a school's teaching and learning activities. This systematic cycle includes the following stages:

- organizing the planning process
- defining program mission, goals, and objectives
- collecting needed information
- implementing planning recommendations
- evaluating the library media program's functions and effectiveness.

Managing a library media program involves several distinct components of expertise and activity. Primary components of management include: the budgeting process, staffing activities, organization and direction of the program, and promotion and marketing of the program.

***Information Power*—Chapter Five**

The guidelines make clear that "the success of any school library media program, no matter how well designed depends ultimately on the quality and number of the personnel responsible for the program." Simply stated, program output is influenced by the staffing pattern—professional, technical, and clerical—assigned full-time to the library media program. Several factors combine to determine the appropriate staffing patterns for a given school, including school size and population; the degree of integration of the library media program into the curriculum; school program organization; the relationship of student learning activities to library media resources; and the expectations of faculty, administrators, and students. The statement is made in the guidelines that "All students, teachers, and administrators in each school building at all grade levels deserve access to a library media program provided by a certificated library media specialist working full-time in the school's library media center."

Distinct responsibilities are assumed by the different categories of staffing for a library media program. Further, distinct prerequisite training is required for each category of library media staff member. The library media specialist, as head of a school library media program, is a certificated professional, a member of the faculty, and a supervisor of other professional and support staff. A school library media specialist possesses a master's degree from an accredited graduate program emphasizing library and information science, education theory and practices, communications theory, and technology. Support staff—technicians, technical assistants, and clerical staff—require both generalized knowledge of library media program roles and activities, and specific training requisite for the skilled performance of their assigned duties. The primary function of support staff is to free the professionals for more direct curricular work with faculty and students.

Responsibility for evaluating library media specialists, as is true for other teachers, most often rests with the school principal. In larger school systems, there also may be a district-level library media supervisor who evaluates library media personnel. The evaluation process presumes the existence of clearly defined and jointly accepted job descriptions which in turn prescribe roles

and functions from which specific performance development criteria are drawn.

Information Power—Chapter Six

The traditional meaning of the phrase "library collection" is undergoing significant change in library media centers. Several trends are becoming evident in the area of collection resources and equipment. They are:

- Library media collections are increasingly including all print and nonprint materials, and equipment for their management, production, and use, regardless of the funding source or housing locale within the school.
- Collection resources are becoming more accessible from outside the school.
- Technological changes are promoting the proliferation of information storage formats and delivery systems, hence the expanded and ready availability of information itself.
- Emphases on the individual needs of learners and on changes in the curricular structure call for a collection development partnership that includes subject area teachers, administrators, and library media specialists.

Library media center collections are in a transitional state, as resource usage changes to accommodate individual learning needs and styles. The 1988 guidelines place this change in perspective:

> Although schools will broaden the information resources available to users through direct electronic access, students and teachers will continue to need a well selected building level collection capable of satisfying a large percentage of the instructional resource needs ... Adequacy of the collection size is best determined through an evaluation of how well the collection and information services are meeting the needs of the users. (pp. 71, 72)

This matching of user needs with collection and information services is conducted through a systematic, ongoing process—planned collection development—as contrasted with the narrower-focused activity of item-by-item selection.

An underpinning of the collection development process is the establishment of a district-wide selection policy, which provides the bases for selecting and deleting collection materials; designation of authority; identification of participants in the process; objectives for collection building; evaluation of user needs; and criteria for selection. The process of collection development is itself composed of a systematic sequence of activities: school/community analysis, selection, acquisition, and evaluation. This system is rendered effective through an ongoing process of bibliographic control, which requires:

- the logical organization of collection materials, preferably with standardized procedures, and with an aim toward automation
- periodic maintenance through inventory, and the removal of outdated or inaccurate collection materials
- implementation of circulation systems and policies that promote ready and free access to collection materials.

New modes of information access, library networks, resource sharing, online databases, and union catalogs of district, regional, or state holdings, extend the scope and responsibilities inherent in managing collection development.

Information Power—Chapter Seven

The primary issue in a facilities design for a school library media program is the relationship of facilities layout to the instructional and learning requirements of teachers and students. The planning of program facilities should be undertaken with teachers, administrators, and the library media specialist as co-participants. An architectural concept that form follows function may be applied in the planning of library media program facilities.

> A plan for school library media program facilities carefully interprets the program functions and determines the spaces required for those functions. The arrangement of facilities should create an environment that encourages the use of various media, facilitates inquiry, helps motivate students to use the materials and services necessary for learning, and provides the design flexibility needed to accommodate new technologies, (pp. 87)

Program functions to consider in facilities planning include: user access to specific components of the library media collection; independent study; small group and large group, formal and informal instruction; consulting and planning spaces; instructional media production; and technical services/processing. Among other variables of importance are the following: a distinction between grade levels of schools; student populations; location of the library media center within the school building; organization for effective supervision; and safety considerations. Selection of equipment and furnishings should be made with consideration given to durability, versatility, quality, and appropriateness for the size and age of the students being served.

Information Power—Chapter Eight

The guidelines state that the primary function of district, regional, and state library media programs is to support school-level programs: "Building-level programs are becoming more dependent upon the support and cooperation of these agencies as information continues to multiply and new developments in technology occur." This support may be reflected in such processes as resource sharing, cooperative programming, and leadership in facing the challenges of technological change.

A district library media program director, who is a member of the central administrative staff, has many responsibilties in supporting a comprehensive library media program:

- participates in district-wide curriculum and instruction committees, advocating the integration of library media

program activity into school curricula, and emphasizing the partnership role of teachers and library media specialists
- informs the superintendent, board of education, other district personnel, and the community at large of the library media program goals and needs
- supervises and coordinates the district's library media programming
- acts as a liaison among individual schools, the district organization as a whole, and the board of education.

While individual patterns may vary, regional and state library media programs provide valuable support and services for schools and districts. It is their goal, developed with a comprehensive perspective of the library media field, to improve the quality and effectiveness of school library media programs throughout a region or state.

Section 2

Organizing Discussion Sessions

The meeting planner will need to match goals and desired outcome of a session with the constituents' interests and the type of meeting that will best effect positive results. The planner(s) will need to arrange for speakers when needed, schedule the date(s) of the sessions, identify participants, select facilities suitable for the number of participants, choose an effective session leader who will be assisted by small group discussion leaders when needed, and prepare publicity before and after the sessions.

When a principal speaker (or panel) is used, the availability of these persons will determine the actual date. Two or three suitable dates (based on availability of meeting space) should be suggested when approaching possible speakers, but the actual date will depend upon their own commitments. When weather may interfere, backup dates are useful. The selection of a meeting site may depend upon the planned type and size of the discussion session, and the proposed constituent group of participants. The meeting date should be set far enough ahead to allow for advance publicity and invitation of participants. Arrangements for seating, refreshments, handouts, or other materials needed for the discussion session(s) should be made according to the number of persons attending.

The primary planner may or may not be the discussion leader. The presence of resource persons can be helpful. At various times throughout the meeting, and as needed, library media specialists can provide information about the ongoing programs, and administrators can supply background about funding,

curriculum, policies, goals, or evaluation techniques. The discussion leader should refrain from interjecting personal opinion, but may ask questions that will spotlight or clarify a particular issue to assure that the various sides of a topic are covered, or simply to revive a lagging discussion. The discussion leader should insist that all discussions be directed to the group as a whole, that they relate to the topic, and that no one individual dominates the session.

Advance study and careful preparation should be the commitment of session leaders. An agenda or meeting outline provides structure and should be distributed to participants. Session meetings should: start and end at the times stated; have a clear purpose and plan of operation; and be kept to the advertised topic or content. This structure requires that the initiator and other planners meet ahead of time to select the areas in *Information Power* to be emphasized; to select, revise, or formulate questions to be used; to arrange for any electronic or other equipment that is needed; and to identify and assign responsibilities for managing the session. When the discussion leaders are not members of the initial planning group, an additional meeting is necessary with those individuals so that they can become confident about what they are expected to do and accomplish during the discussion meeting.

Goals of the Discussion Sessions

Persons not directly associated with school library media programs will acquire a more comprehensive grasp of the value of these programs in the educational process.

Persons involved in school library media programs will become familiar with *Information Power* and recognize the educational impact of its new approach.

All persons will become increasingly supportive of school library media programs and will be motivated to work toward providing the fully functioning, quality library media programs in their local schools.

Specific projects may be identified, tasks assigned, and timelines for accomplishing objectives may be established.

Structure of the Discussion Session

The discussion leader, or person assigned the responsibility, will:

- call the meeting to order
- identify and introduce the persons who will be facilitating the session
- describe the plan for the meeting: speaker; panel; questions from the floor; small group discussions; report to the reassembled whole; or other approach
- open the discussion by commenting on the topic for discussion and its importance, and seek to relate it to the interests of the group
- strive to keep the flow of discussion on track
- move toward closure: summarize the main thoughts expressed during the session; determine further activity by the group that will tie in with implementing the portion of the guidelines that has just been addressed; make assignments, establish sub-committees, or set additional meeting dates.
- close the meeting, thanking presenters and participants for their attendance, interest, and contributions.

Types of Meetings

Meetings may be for large groups or small groups, may be single sessions or run for a series of sessions.

Information may be gathered in an opinion "pulse-taking" approach, or needs may be identified through a discrepancy analysis approach.

Information may be disseminated in different formats: a lecture, in workshops, or in a short course.

Constituents may be called together (on local, county, regional, state, or national levels) to identify problems and suggest solutions.

Who to Involve

Discussion groups will be most effective when there is a match between relevance of questions and the interests of a discussion group. Sometimes, it will be advisable to have a mixed constituency in which the points of view of various types of educators are shared. In these sessions, horizons will be broadened and greater understanding will be established. The base for cooperative planning should be strengthened.

On other occasions, a more homogeneous grouping of discussion participants may promote a higher degree of effectiveness. School library media specialists, school administrators, classroom teachers, teacher educators, state department of education personnel, and lay community constituencies each have their own responsibilities, problems, and concerns as well as contributions to make toward implementing the complete mission of the school library media center program.

Section

Planning Questions for Discussion Sessions

Throughout *Information Power* there are statements and questions marked with asterisks. These form a checklist of topics suitable for examination during group discussion. They are, by their placement, identified with specific topical concerns, but they should be examined by all constituencies to identify potential effects, responsibilities, and interrelationships suggested by the mission of the school library media program. Once overall familiarity with the guidelines message is established, then specific topics of interest to a constituency can be examined in detail.

The following five concepts are basic to all discussions, and should serve as introductory questions for every constituency discussion group:

1. What is meant by school library media program, and how does this differ from merely providing a school library media center?
2. What constitutes a school library media program, and how can an effective one be identified?
3. What are the ramifications of changes in society and technology on school curricula, and what new demands are placed upon the school library media center and the school library media specialist in partnership with classroom teachers, in response to these changes?
4. Who has responsibility for implementing each facet of the school library media program as well as providing equity of intellectual and physical access to information?
5. What plan of action will bring about quality school library media programs?

Obviously, some topics or sub-topics will be more relevant than others to specific constituencies. Questions for a specific group can be suggested by the asterisked statements and questions referred to above, or may be taken from questions that follow constituency descriptions below.

Specific Constituencies

Library Media Specialists

Information Power is addressed primarily to school library media specialists, and their leadership is anticipated in the process of interpreting and implementing the guidelines. There are library media specialists who have continuously upgraded their initial training and preparation through additional coursework, participation in professional associations, attendance at conferences and workshops, and personal reading. There are other library media specialists who may be encountering the thrusts of the guidelines for the first time, or who may need considerable persuasion to become involved in certain areas of the broader interpretation of mission within a school library media program.

Questions of interest to library media specialists include:

- What attitudinal, operational, and interpersonal changes, accompanied by mastery of evolving educational practices, must occur for school library media specialists to accommodate the concept of the three-part professional role (information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant)?
- How can the partnership between school library media specialists and classroom teachers, and with administrators, be strengthened?
- How can long-range collection development (as contrasted with item-by-item selection of materials) be assured?
- What should be the availability, scope, and use of information services external to the school?

Administrators and Boards of Education

Policies and goals for the school system are established by the board of education. The superintendent is hired to see that these policies are carried out. Depending upon the size of the school system, the superintendent may be working only with school principals or there may be a number of additional administrators responsible for district-wide, grade-level, or curricular functions.

Questions of interest to administrators include the following:

- What philosophical and attitudinal changes pertaining to use of the school library media center program can be effected without requiring extensive funding?
- What form of partnership should be established between administrators and school library media specialists in terms of improving the effectiveness of a school library media program?
- How can evaluation procedures be improved to identify specific contributions of the library media program within the school's instructional programs?
- What steps can be taken by administrators to become stronger advocates of school library media programs as integral parts of curriculum?
- When examining curricular implications, what are the differences between locating information and being able to think critically about, to evaluate, and to use that information effectively? Since traditional "library skills" tend to have stopped with locating information, how should higher order thought be introduced into the curriculum?

Classroom Teachers

As classroom teachers move toward greater partnership with school library media specialists, and as they are expected by their administrators to make use of the school library media programs in changed ways, they will find familiarity with *Information Power* a major help. Frequently, classroom teachers are involved in designing their own staff development programs. Discussion

sessions designed for the classroom teacher may possibly be organized by subject matter content areas.

Questions with importance for classroom teachers include the following:

- What should the classroom teacher be able to expect as outputs of the school library media program?
- What are the ramifications of a classroom teacher/library media specialist partnership in developing and imparting curriculum and instruction?
- What are the responsibilities of the classroom teacher in developing instructional activities which go beyond information retrieval to emphasize the application of information in critical thinking, necessary as a life skill in an information age?
- How can changes in curricular methods be incorporated, without becoming "add-on" requirements?

College and University Faculty

Faculty who are responsible for the training of school library media specialists, classroom teachers, and administrators will find significant relevance to their work in *Information Power*. Preparatory coursework and experience designed to qualify students for certification requirements must be updated to reflect the current demands made on graduates once they are employed in a school. Because of the changed interpretations and thrusts within the field of library media, especially the partnership and curricular roles described in the guidelines, faculty in schools of education as well as graduate library schools should be encouraged to participate in discussion sessions.

Questions that have implications for college and university faculty include the following:

- What course content and training experiences are needed to prepare competent school library media specialists, classroom teachers, and school administrators relative to school library media program issues?
- How can school of education and library and information

technology faculties keep current in the field of building-level school library media programming?
- To what extent would cooperative planning of course content in administration, teacher preparation, and school library media classes be possible and desirable?

State Department of Education Personnel

Personnel at the state level, led by the chief state school officer, set overall objectives for providing the best possible schools for their state. Included are policies and plans for the development of school library media programs and standards for certification of school personnel. These state level educators need to understand the role of school library media professionals in education today and keep abreast of changing demands being made upon information needs, management, and use. State level standards, guidelines, policies, recommendations, and professional certification should reflect the shifts in educational requirements identified in *Information Power*.

Questions suitable for state department of education personnel include the following:

- How can provision be made at the state level for the development and improvement of school library media programs?
- In what ways can a minimum standard be established and maintained while encouraging school districts to exceed that minimum?
- What provisions can be made at the state level to promote research, legislation, and enforcement of mandates concerning school library media programs?
- What means can be undertaken to provide leadership in the evaluation and appropriate uses of emerging technologies?

Members of the Community at Large (especially those without children in the schools)

American society has experienced tremendous change, becoming more diverse both culturally and linguistically. Minorities

constitute larger percentages of the population, and the traditional pattern of assimilation of immigrant groups into the American cultural mainstream has been altered. Growing numbers of women are in the workforce. More children live with one parent or other adult. Families break up and reform into new families. The population as a whole has become increasingly mobile.

As a result, members of the entire community should be encouraged to participate in discussion sessions.

Questions especially important to them include the following:

- How can citizens contribute to the development of, and provide support for, quality school library media programs?
- How can community members participate in designing a school library media program that meets the needs of their community?

Mixed Constituencies

As the partnership for supporting school library media programs reaches its fullest potential, the community as a whole must work together. Because of the variety of constituencies—and because of the specialities, responsibilities, and interests of each—there is merit in holding community-wide meetings. These may tend to start as informational exchanges, but as goals become clear, there may be considerable mixing of constituencies working on projects of mutual concern.

Questions that mixed constituency groups may wish to address include the following:

- How can members of various constituencies arrive at a consensus regarding perceptions of what constitutes a quality school library media program?
- How can members of the various constituencies act upon their shared perceptions to produce a quality school library media program?

Conclusion

Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs provides a vision for developing and implementing library media programs that are an integral part of the educational process. The vision only can be realized, however, through the cooperative efforts of the entire educational community. As *Information Power* states, "The ultimate success of school library media programs depends, to a large extent, upon the level of understanding and support within the general school community for the mission, goals, and objectives of the program."

This guide is designed to help individuals plan and lead effective discussion sessions that will result in a high level of understanding and support for local school library media programs. Through this understanding, programs can be developed and implemented that will enable students and faculty to become effective and efficient users of information today and throughout their lives.

American Association of School
Librarians
American Library Association
50 E. Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
0-8389-7256-X

Association for Educational
Communications and Technology
1126 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
0-89240-056-0